THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Except Tamil Nadu, no State has independent legislation on urban land ceiling. Both the Central Act and the Tamil Nadu Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act, 1978 had similar objectives. The Central Act now stands repleaded.

(b) and (c) No market rates of land are fixed under Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act, 1976, which now stands repealed.

Amendments to Patents Law

*100. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what was the precise commitment to World Trade Organisation with regard to amendments to the Patents Law; and

(b) what specific steps are contemplated to prevent encroachments in areas, patently like Neem, Turmeric, Basmati Rice etc?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) As per the provisions of the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) Agreement, which is a part of Agreement establishing the World Trade Organisation (WTO), during the transition period, amendments are required to be made in 3 stages i.e. by 1 January, 1995, 1 January, 2000 and 1 January, 2005.

By 1st January, 1995, means were to be established to receive product patent application and to provide exclusive marketing rights, on fulfilment of certain conditions, in the fields of pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals. By 1 January, 2000 India is required to increase the term of patent protection to 20 years, reverse of burden of proof in process patents, etc. By 1 January, 2005 products patent protection has to be extended to areas of technologies not protected so far, namely, food medicines and chemical products.

(b) Patents are granted by respective Gopvernments under their patent laws and right thereunder are restricted to the territorial boundry of the country. Whenever information is received about patents being taken on certain products which are not considered patentable, steps are taken to assess whether grant of patent can be challenged.

Trade with Russia

621. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have entered into a long term trade agreement during the recent visit of the Prime Minister of erstwhile Soviet Union;

(b) if so, what are its salient features and the proposed quantum of increase in trade between the two countries;

(c) whether Government would ensure that such an agreement does not give unprecedented rise in the cost of leather and leather products in domestic market which had been scarce earlier because of exports to Soviet Union; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) A Joint Document on Development of Trade, Economic; Industrial, Financial, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was signed. The validity of the Joint Document is upto 2010. As per the Joint Document, the sides consider that there is a potential for increasing the volume of bilateral trade turnover to two times by 2000 and four times by 2005. The two sides agreed to take necessary steps to diversify the basket of bilateral trade by encouraging trade in non-tradi-